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HYDRO-ELECTRIC INQUIRY COMMISSION

<u>CONFERENCE</u>

with

MR. A. V. WHITE.



COMMISSIONERS

W. D. GREGORY, CHAIRMAN M. J. HANEY LLOYD HARRIS J. A. ROSS R. A. ROSS

F. W. WEGENAST, LEGAL ADVISER J. H. W. BOWER, SECRETARY



Hydro Electric Inquiry Commission

36 KING ST. EAST

MR. WEGENAST:

We have our eye on Section 14 of the Power Commission Act, under which the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council has power to borrow money, in accordance with the Provincial Losns Act, and pay that money over to the Hydro-Electric Power Commission, to be accounted for and audited in the usual way.

MR. WHITE:

The same as Section 14, in R.S.O., Chap. 39 and Section 17 in the Act of 1906.
(With)

MR. WEGENAST:

That Section 24-B of the Power Commission Act under which, under certain circumstances, a special warrant may be issued by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council on requisition of the Chairman.
What is the relation between these two Sections?

I was given to understand that under Section 14 it was necessary, or at all events it was the practice, to have the amounts appropriated in the amount estimates. I understand from you that that was not always the pract-

ice.

MR. WHITE:

You will see that, in the original Act, there is the power given to the Lieutenant-Governor to raise, by way of loans, any sums required for Hydro purposes.

MR. WEGENAST:

You stated to me that you considered that that is a legislative appropriation.

MR. WHITE:

That is a legislative appropriation and is recognized by all the banking houses who have bought our bonds to borrow up to any amount.

CHAIRMAN:

It is really not a legislative appropriation. It is merely done by Order-in-Council.

MR. WEGENAST:

My point is that the regular way is under the authority of legislative enactment, which takes the form of a supply bill. Is that right?

MR. WHITE:

For the items set out in the supply bill voted by the House.

MR. WEGENAST:

The ordinary way of financing is through the estimates and the supply bill?

CHAIRMAN:

But there are exceptions?

MR. WHITE:

We supplement the supply bill by authority to make certain loans. You will find in the Statutes there are different acts authorizing the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to borrow money for the general purposes of the Province.

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In addition to the monies voted in supply, the Government

require money to carry on the Government and the exact amount is not known and authority is simply given to

borrow money for these purposes.

MH. WECHMEST: We have our eye on Section 14 of the Power ow Line Lieutenent-Gevernor-in-Council the Lieutenent-Gevernor-in-Council the has gower to berrow money, in accordance with the

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MR. WEGENAST:

Chapter 7 of the Statutes of 1921 gives the form that is passed each year. That gives the Lieutenant Governor authority to borrow money for these purposes, limited as to amount. The authority given in Section 14 of the Power Commission act is unlimited as to amount.

MR. WHITE:

There is nothing similar in any legislation passed in Great Britain, the Colonies or the United States.

CHAIRMAN:

In this case, you would have to give a sort of guarantee because the Province gives nothing until the Commission asks for it. The Government cannot give it out of its own volition. It has to have a request with the necessary authority. You must get the consent of public body.

MR. WEGENAST:

This is an unlimited provision in that it is unlimited as to amount.

CHAIRMAN:

I suppose they could guarantee \$100,000,000 if the wished

MR. WHITE:

We have done more than that. We do not guarantee but we issue bonds of the Province. It differs in this respect from the general legislation. Supplies are voted for one year and, as you know, Parliament has to vote supplies every year and that is why they are called every year. They do not vote beyond a year.

MR. WEGENAST:

That is one of the main checks of the Legislature on the Government.

MR. WHITE:

Yes. Originally, it was the check the people had on the Government.

MR. WEGENAST:

That was what the Rebellion of 1837 was about.

they

CHAIRMAN:

If they can raise the public revenues in the same way the would not need to call the Legislature.

MR. WEGENAST:

In 1837 that was the issue.

CHAIRMAN:

It is the Legislature's own action in delegating its powers.

MR. WEGENAST:

Some people would take issue with you when you say that the Legislature represents these municipalities.

CHAIRMAN:

No. I said the Hydro. These other public bodies, representing the municipalities, have to ask for the money and guarantee its payment.

MR. WHITE:

I am not criticizing the advisability or propriety of it.

CHAIRMAN:

They require as a proliminary that these other public bodies shall ask for it and guarantee payment out of the rates charged for power and light.

IR.WEGINAST: Chapter 7 of the states of 1931 gives the fem to term to te passes as year. That gives the lieutenant Covernor to the section is the control of the parties as to anomat. The authority given in Section 14 of the Power Countries is unlimited as to anomat.

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Mr. White:

It would be safe to go further and say that the Legislature would not have done it had they anticipated that it would run into such a large sum.

Mr. Wegenast:

It is a rare instance, if not the only one, of the Legislature deputing the power of appropriating money.

Mr. White:

I might so further and explain the method under which we raise money under the Act ---

Mr. Wegenast:

I was coming to that. I understood, as I said, that it was the practice, notwithstanding Section 14, to include some of the amounts for H dro Electric purposes in the estimates.

Mr. White:

I think the Hydro, in recent years, have brought in estimates of their expected expenditure for the year.

Chairman:

I think that has been done by the Government itself.
because there is great responsibility on the Government.
I would think that would be done to work out the basis
on which the money would be transferred from the
Treasury of the Province to the Hydro.

Mr. Wegenast:

So far as the Auditor is concerned, you think Section 14 is sufficient authority for his taking the Order-in-Council as the basis of any warrant.

Mr. White:

I would rather the Auditor would explain that to you.

Mr. Wegenast:

I would value your opinion, Mr. White.

Mr. Foster:

In other words, is there any legal requirement, requiring the Commission to submit estimates?

Mr. White:

As I understand the Act, in the Consolidated Statues, there was no machinery for providing......

Mr. Wegenast:

So that an appropriation by the Legislature was still necessary?

Mr. White:

No. I understand, without studying the Act carefully, that the Government handed the money over to the Hydro, on their requisition, subject to any inquiry they might care to make themselves as to whether it was necessary.

Mr. Wegenast:

So that these annual appropriations in the estimates were not necessary for the purposes of the Auditor?

Mr. White:

I would think they were just a guide for the Government. The Auditor might, for his own protection, say "I require a special warrant". I am speaking of the Act as originally drawn, before there was a provision regarding estimates. Does the Auditor say that, in 1915 for instance or 1914, under the Section, he required a warrant -- a special warrant?

Mr. Wegenast:

He does not say so but he does not say the opposite. He points out that, in 1914, there were appropriations

Mr. White:

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instance or 1914, under the rection, he required a Tinering Lalosge a -- Justusy made under Miscellaneous or under Hydro- Electric.

Mr. White: I think the Hydro, from time to time, tried to give an estimate of what their requirements for the year would be and probably for the inform tion of the members of the House -- as a guide for the Government.

Mr. Wegenast: Apparently the practice was more strict after Mr. McGarry took office than it was before.

Mr. White: I cannot say. Mr. McGarry was there in 1914.

Mr. Wegenast: At all events, as the result of criticism from the Opposition, the estimates from 1916 were more correctly brought before the House than they were before?

Mr. White: I know nothing about that, nor what reason there would be for it.

Mr. Wegenast: Mr. Clarke, have you gone exhaustively into the subject of the proportions of monies advanced in estimates and other ways?

Mr. Clarke: I talked to Mr. Jennings and Mr. Brown, this morning, and they said it would take too long for me to do it myself and they offered to do it and hand it down, as they could do it in about two hours.

Mr. White: Wou understand that, in addition to the estimates that the Hydro made at the request of some members of the Government—— (I do not say that they were bound to make an estimate.) They would not give the Government much idea of what the real expenditures were. I do not think they feel themselves tied down.

Mr. Wegenest: We are told that it was the practice, up to recent years, for the Hydro-Electric Commission to wait until after the Session had closed before making their full requisition for funds?

Mr. White: I think I have heard some discussion in the House about that, and objection was taken that they did not get their estimates down earlier.

Mr. Wegenast: And, ultimately, Mr. Clancey took exception to that?

Mr. White: Mr. Clancey would take exception, if there was any chance, any time.

Mr. Wegenast: The practice has been tightened up under the present Government. Would you care to controvert that?

Mr. White: I would think that, as the expenditure increased, the tendency would likely be to say "What is that for?"

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Mr. Wegenast: Now I come to the point of trying to corelate

Section 24-B with Section 14. Why was 24-B necessary
if there was ample power under 14?

Mr. White:

I do not know that it is necessary. Section 24-B gives authority to pass special warrants for mones required in addition to what the Hydro estimates call for. Is that right?

Mr. Wegenast: I thought so. You see my difficulty?

Mr. White: At any time that the Government wished to say "This is an urgent case and money is required for it", they could pass upon it.

Mr. Wegenast: Without the authority of Section 24-B.

Mr; White: Outside of the Hydro entirely. Suppose they wanted five thousand tons of coal. There is nothing in the estimate about it. Suppose they wanted to supply coal for the Civil Service. There is no reason why they could not, by special warrant, pay out the money.

Mr. Wegenast: It has been pointed out that the provision for special warrant in section 24-B is based on the provision of the Audit Act for Treasury Board Minutes and it would have been better to have called them Treasury Board Minutes than special warrants.

Mr. White: Possibly.

Mr. Wegenast: What is the essential difference between Treasury Board Minutes and Special Warrants.

Mr. White: I do not know that there is any difference in effect but there may be in working it out.

Mr. Foster: You say, for instance, that the Government have authority to spend half a million dollars to buy coal?

Mr. White: By Special Warrant but that must be tabled during the first two weeks of the Session.

Mr. Foster: For the purposes of the Hydro, for the appropriation of the Legislature, under what Statute is this authority granted it?

Mr. White: Under the Audit Act.

Mr. Foster: If that is so, the Hydro legislation is not so unified after all.

Mr. White. That is only from year to year and the Special Warrant must be laid on the table of the House; if the House disapproved----

Mr. Drury thinks he is responsible, although it is necessary to table these Special warrants.

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Mr. White:

It may be that there is some idea of that kind in that legislation to take the responsibility off the Government and put it on the Commission. The man who drew the Act would know what he had in mind.

Mr. Wegenast:

That gets us on to something solid. We have tried for days to get that.

Mr. White:

I hope I am not putting you on a wrong track but that is my idea. I prepare the leans, etc., and they are all passed upon by the large financial houses who buy the bonds.

Mr. Wegenast:

Are you in a position to say, off hand, to what extent money has been borrowed for Hydro-Electric purposes by Treasury Board Minutes?

Mr. White:

We never borrow that way.

Mr. Wegenast:

Appropriated, I mean.

Mr. White:

I do not know.

Mr. Wegenast:

But Treasury Board Minutes have been issued?

Mr. White:

Oh, yes.

Mr. Foster:

What we are trying to get at, Mr. White, is this:
we want to place before the Commissioners a concise
statement as to the different ways in which the Province
finances the Commission.

Mr. Wegenast:

FR. IBSESSE

I have here eight (8) methods by which money is supplied to the Hydro:

- 1 By appropriations made by the Legislature;
- 2 By the Government, under Special Warrant, under Section 24 (b);
- 3 By borrowing on the security of debentures, issued by the Commission and guaranteed by the Province;
- 4 By borrowing on the security of debentures, issued by the Commission, without the guarantee of the Province;
- 5 By borrowing on the security of debentures, issued by the Commission, guaranteed by the Province and supported by underlying bonds of the municipality;
- 6 By borrowings of the Commission without security of debentures;
- 7 By profits made on trading account;
- 8 By the Government by Treasury Board Minutes.

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Take method No. 1?

Mr. White: When the bought the Ontario Power Company they had to pay, say Ten million dollars. The H dro Commission issued their own bonds and we guaranteed their bonds and they handed their bonds over to the owners of the stock and took the stock.

Mr. Wegenast: But that was not a case of appropriation by the Legislature or appropriation under Special Warrant -- it was under a different powers.

Mr. White: Was that not provided for by the Act under which they were authorized to buy that plant?

Mr. Wegenast: There was an amendment in the general Act that year.

Mr. White: If you get the Orders-in-Council it would give the authority, I think, in some of their acts. Was there not a special act, under which they purchased the Central Ontario System? would give them the authority to issue bonds and for us to guarantee them.

Mr. Foster: This third class was not an advance from the Province

Mr. White: No. Supplying them with credit. The Commission are giving a promissory note for that and we are endowing their note.

Mr. Wegenast: The wherewithal for the different Hydro-Electric undertakings is supplied in these different ways.

Mr. Foster: Do you remember that the Commission claim that is not an advance and for that reason they do not need sinking funds

Mr. Wegenast: The fourth method is (See page 6).

I am talking about methods of getting money.

The fifth is (see page 6) a That is the Hydro Radial.

Mr. White: I do not think there has been anything done of that kind.

Mr. Wegenast: The Clean up Deal and in Guelph.

Mr. White:

I had nothing to do with that.

I think in wind or they guaranteed the bonds and then they quit. I think that was the only instance. My recollection is that the Border Cities case is the only case in which the Government of the Province guaranteed.

Mr. Wegenast: Essex Electric Railway?
The sixth method is (See page 6)
They borrowed One Million Dollars from the Bank of
Montreal without security.

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Mr. White: Yes.

Mr. Wegenast: The seventh method is (see page 6).

Mr. White: They make certain profits.

Mr. Wegenast: They lose on some Systems and make it up on others.

Do you know of any other way they can get money?

Do Treasury Board Minutes represent another way?

Mr. White: I have nothing to do with Treasury Board Minutes and am not familiar with them.

Mr. Wegenast: We shall have to ask the Auditor about that. Do you see Anything to prevent that method being followed?

Mr. Poster: There seems to be so little difference between the two.

Mr. Wegenast: I am through. I am exhausted. If any of the rest of you have any ideas----

Mr. Clarke: Under the Audit Act can the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council increase an estimate already granted?

Mr. White: By Special Warrant they can do it, if an estimate is exhausted.

Mr. Clarke: Under the Audit Act it is a Treasury Board Minute.

Mr. white: They might use that. I do not know just what they do when they exhaust their fund. They probably use Treasury Board Minutes for that.

Mr. Foster: Who constitutes the Treasury Board?

Mr. White: The Audit Act provides that the Treasurer, Chairman of the Council and attorney General, I think.

Mr. Clarke: Would there be any advantage in having the t power given to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council?

Mr. White: You mean the Treasury Board? That is just three members of the Council. The function of the Treasury Board is to decide whether or not a check shall issue if the Auditor holds it up.

Mr. Latimer: It was suggested the other day that the Treasury Board Minute was to supplement the estimates, while an Order-in-Council was usual for some new undertaking. Is there that difference in your mind?

Mr. White: I cannot say anything about Treasury Board Minutes.

I never drew one and never looked into it.

Mr. *egenast: That would mean they have not used them since you have been there?

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Mr. White: Not necessarily.

Mr. Regenast: In the case of a General Special Warrent, there must be some urgency? In the case of a Treasury Board Minute, there must have been an appropriation which is exhausted?

Mr. White: That is probably the difference. It is only necessary to say in the order.

Mr. Wegenast: The Act provides that if, when the Legislature is not in session, an accident happens to any public work, which requires an immediate outlay, etc. (Quote)... A Special Warrant is really an Order-in-Council?

Mr. White: It is an Order-in-Council. I draw up Orders-in-Council for them and it is an Order-in-Council.

Mr. Wegenast: Section 26 provides: (Quote)

Mr. White: I do not use that because I am not the head of the Spending Department. I am the collecting end of the business.

Mr. Clarke: Would there be any advantage in giving to the Cabinet the power to pass a Treasury Board Minute?

Mr. Foster: Nine members of the Cabinet, three of whom are members of the Treasury Board.

Mr. White: It is more convenient.

Mr. Wegenast: Why was it necessary to pass Section 24-B. You already had something. (Quote: "If, when the Legislature is not in session, an accident happens, etc.")

I believe that answers our question, that section was not broad enough.

Mr. White: It has not been confined to that. You can find, by reference to the Special warrants, there are lots of cases where there has been nothing in the nature of an accident to a building.

Mr. Wegenast: I am trying to get at the psychology of the present Government and its members in passing Section 24-B in 1920. Was it intended to restrict the power?

Mr. White: I do not know that.

Mr. Wegenast: Or to regularize?

Mr. White: You will have to figure that out yourself. I know nothing about it. There is another way in which the Hydro borrow money. I do not know what you would call it. They assume the liability. For instance, if they were to buy a Power Company which had One Million dollars of capital stock and One million dollars of

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debenture indebtedness, they would buy the stock and assume the indebtedness.

Mr. Wegenast: There is a special provision for that too. They assumed \$14,000,000 on the Ontario Power Co. That is getting money.

Mr. White: I think there is not any provision for sinking fund for that.

Mr. Wegenast: If attached to that power to assume liability, there were a power to set up in respect to it.

Mr. Latimer: There was no power, although they have done so in the case of Essex.

Mr. Foster:

Mr. Clarke raised this point. He says that a Special Warrant is used for special cases in an amergency.

Treasury Board Minute is used where an appropriation is exhausted. Section 14 contemplates the general purpose of this Act. He suggests that Section 24-B was issued because, under the Audit Act, a Treasury Board Minute had to be passed where an appropriation was exhausted and the effect of Section 24-B would be to require the passage of a Special Warrant by the whole Cabinet, where an appropriation had been exhausted.

Mr. Wegenast: That is a possible explanation.

Mr. Foster: They found it was getting to be a regular thing that these appropriations were exhausted.

Mr. White: You will find, probably, as a matter of fact, that the Hydro estimates were exceeded every year. In the nature of things they could not give a true estimate of their expenditures.

Mr. Wegenast: Mr. Dymond can probably clear that up for you.

Mr. White: Yes.

Mr. White then retired.

debenture indebtedness, they would buy the stock and easume the indebtedness.

Mr. Wegenaet:

There is a special prevision for that too. They assumd alf. 000.000 on the Onterto Poses Co. That is getting money.

Mr. antho:

I think there is not ear provision for that.

Mr. regenost:

If attached to that power to assume liability, there were a power to set up in respect to it,

Mr. Letimon:

There was no power, although they have done so in the

Mr. Foaver:

Art. Clarks related this point. He says at the special Serial Serial terms is used for special eases in an amorgency. Serial terms as appropriation frecauty Beard Minute to used where an appropriation at Exhausted. Serial 14 contemplates the section at He-Bayes of this act, a frecauty purpose of this act, and to be passed where an appropriation was armanated and the effect of Section 24-5 would be west armanated and the effect of Section 24-5 would be to require the passage of a Section 24-5 would be to require the passage of a Section 24-6 would be whele Cabinet, where an appropriation had been ex-

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